THE TRIUMPH of ISIS,

A

POEM.

OCCASIONED BY

ISIS, an ELEGY.

By Mason.

Quid mihi neſcio quam, proprio cum Tybride, Romam
Semper in ore geris? referunt ſi vera Parentes,
Hanc Urbem inſano Nullus qui Marte petivit
Lætatus violâſſe redît. Nec numina ſedem
Deſtituunt.—— CLAUDIAN.

LONDON,
Printed for W. OWEN, at *Homer*'s *Head* near *Temple-Bar*.

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OF

ISIS.

ON closing flow'rs when genial gales diffuse
The fragrant tribute of refreshing dews;
When chaunts the milk-maid at her balmy pail,
And weary reapers whistle o'er the vale;
Charm'd by the murmurs of the quiv'ring shade,
O'er Isis' willow-fringed banks I stray'd;
And calmly musing, thro' the twilight way,
In pensive mood I fram'd the Doric lay.
When lo! from opening clouds a golden gleam
Pour'd sudden splendours o'er the shadowy stream;
And from the wave arose its guardian queen,
Known by her sweeping stole of glossy green:

While in the coral crown that bound her brow,
Was wove the Delphic laurel's verdant bough.
As the ſmooth ſurface of the dimply flood
The ſilver-ſlipper'd virgin lightly trod,
From her looſe hair the dropping dew ſhe preſs'd,
And thus mine ear in accents mild addreſs'd.

" No more, my ſon, the rural reed employ,
Nor trill the trifling ſtrain of empty joy;
No more thy love-reſounding ſonnets ſuit
To notes of paſt'ral pipe, or oaten flute.
For hark! high thron'd on yon majeſtic walls,
To the dear Muſe afflicted Freedom calls:
When Freedom calls, and OXFORD bids thee ſing,
Why ſtays thy hand to ſtrike the ſounding ſtring?
While thus, in Freedom's and in Phœbus' ſpite,
The venal ſons of ſlaviſh CAM unite;
To ſhake yon tow'rs when malice rears her creſt,
Shall all my ſons in ſilence idly reſt?

Still ſing, O CAM, thy fav'rite Freedom's cauſe,
Still boaſt of Freedom------while you break its laws;

To pow'r your ſongs of *gratulation* pay,
To courts addreſs ſoft flatt'ry's ſoothing lay.
What tho' your gentle M------N's plaintive verſe
Has hung with ſweeteſt wreaths MUSÆUS' herſe;
What tho' your vaunted bard's ingenuous woe,
Soft as my ſtream in tuneful numbers flow;
Yet ſtrove his Muſe, by fame or envy led,
To tear the laurels from a Siſter's head?-----
Miſguided youth! with rude unclaſſic rage,
To blaſt the beauties of thy whiter page;
A rage that ſullies ev'n thy guiltleſs lays,
And blaſts the vernal bloom of half thy Bays.
Let GR------ boaſt the patrons of her name,
Each pompous fool of fortune and of fame;
Still of preferment let her ſhine the queen,
Prolific parent of each bowing Dean!
Be her's each Pr-----te of the pamper'd cheek,
Each courtly Chaplain ſanctify'd and ſleek:
Still let the Drones of her exhauſtleſs hive
On fat pluralities ſupinely thrive.

Still let her ſenates titled ſlaves revere,
Nor dare to know the patriot from the peer;
For tinſel'd courts their laurel'd mount deſpiſe
In ſtars and ſtrings ſuperlatively wiſe:
No longer charm'd by virtue's golden lyre,
Who ſung of old amid th' Aonian choir,
Where CAM, ſlow-winding thro' the breezy reeds,
With kindly wave his groves of laurel feeds.
'Tis ours, my ſon, to deal the ſacred bay,
Where honour calls, and juſtice points the way;
To wear the well-earn'd wreath which merit brings,
And ſnatch a gift beyond the reach of kings!
Scorning and ſcorn'd by courts, yon Muſes' bow'r
Still nor enjoys, nor asks the ſmile of pow'r.
Tho' wakeful vengeance watch my chryſtal ſpring,
Tho' perſecution wave her iron wing,
And o'er yon ſpiry temples as ſhe flies,
" Theſe deſtin'd feats be mine" exulting cries;
On Isis ſtill each gift of fortune waits,
Still peace and plenty crown my beautcous gates.

See Science walks with freſheſt chaplets crown'd,
With ſongs of joy my feſtal groves reſound;
My Muſe divine ſtill keeps her wonted ſtate,
The front erect, and high majeſtic gait.
Green as of old, each oliv'd portal ſmiles,
And ſtill the Graces build my Parian piles:
My Gothic ſpires in ancient grandeur riſe,
And dare with wonted pride to ruſh into the ski
Ah ſhould'ſt thou fall (forbid it heav'nly pow'
Daſh'd into duſt with all thy hundred tow'rs;
Who but would mourn to Britiſh virtue dear,
What patriot could refuſe the manly tear:
What Britiſh † MARIUS would refuſe to weep
O'er mighty CARTHAGE fall'n, a proſtrate heap!
E'en late when RADCLIFFE'S delegated train
Auſpicious ſhone in ISIS' happy plain;
When yon proud ‖ dome, fair Learning's ampleſt ſhrine,
Beneath its Attick roofs receiv'd the Nine;

† *Vid. Vell. Paterc. Lib.* ii. *& Plutarch. in Vit. Marii.*
‡ The Radcliffe Library.

Mute

Mute was the voice of joy and loud applauſe,
To RADCLIFFE due, and ISIS' honour'd cauſe?
What free-born crouds adorn'd the feſtive day,
Nor bluſh'd to wear my tributary bay?
How each brave breaſt with honeſt ardours heav'd,
When SHELDON's fane the patriot band receiv'd;
While, as we loudly hail'd the choſen few,
Rome's awful ſenate ruſh'd upon our view!

O may the day in lateſt annals ſhine,
That made a BEAUFORT and an HARLEY mine!
That bade them leave the loftier ſcene awhile,
The pomp of guiltleſs ſtate, the patriot toil,
For bleeding Albion's aid the ſage deſign,
To hold ſhort dalliance with the tuneful Nine.
While muſic left her golden ſphere on high,
And bore each ſtrain of triumph from the ſky;
Swell'd the loud ſong, and to my chiefs around,
Pour'd the full Pæans of melliſluous ſound;
My Naiads blythe the floating accents caught,
And liſt'ning danc'd beneath their pearly grot:

In

In gentle eddies play'd my wanton wave,
And all my reeds their ſofteſt whiſpers gave;
Each lay with brighter green adorn'd my bow'rs,
And breath'd a freſher fragrance on my flow'rs.
But lo! at once the ſwelling concerts ceaſe,
And crouded theatres are huſh'd in peace.
See on yon ſage how all attentive ſtand,
To catch his darting eye, and waving hand.
Hark! he begins with all a TULLY's art
To pour the dictates of a CATO's heart.
Skill'd to pronounce what nobleſt thoughts inſpire,
He blends the Speaker's with the Patriot's fire;
Bold to conceive, nor timorous to conceal,
What Britons dare to think, he dares to tell:
'Tis his alike the ear and eye to charm,
To win with action, and with ſenſe to warm;
Untaught in flow'ry diction to diſpenſe
The lulling ſounds of ſweet impertinence;
In frowns or ſmiles he gains an equal prize,
Nor meanly fears to fall, nor creeps to riſe:

Bids happier days to ALBION be reſtor'd,
Bids ancient juſtice rear her radiant ſword:
From me, as from my country wins applauſe,
And makes an OXFORD'S a BRITANNIA'S cauſe.

While arms like theſe my ſtedfaſt ſages wield,
While mine is Truth's impenetrable ſhield;
Say, ſhall the PUNY CHAMPION fondly dare,
To wage with force like this *ſcholaſtic* war?
Still vainly ſcribble on with pert pretence,
With all the rage of pedant impotence?
Say, ſhall I foſter this domeſtic peſt;
This parricide that wounds a mother's breaſt?

Thus in ſome ſtately ſhip, that long has bore
Britain's victorious croſs from ſhore to ſhore:
By chance beneath her cloſe ſequeſter'd cells,
Some low-born worm, a lurking miſchief dwells;
Eats his blind way, and ſaps with ſecret toil
The deep foundation of the watry pile.
In vain the forreſt lent its ſtatelieſt pride,
Rear'd her tall maſt, and fram'd her knotty ſide:

In vain the thunder's martial rage ſhe ſtood,
With each fierce conflict of the ſtormy flood;
More ſure the reptile's little arts devour,
Than waves, or wars, or Eurus' wintry pow'r.

Ye venerable bow'rs, ye ſeats ſublime,
Clad in the moſſy veſt of fleeting time;
Ye ſtately Piles of old munificence,
At once the pride of Learning, and defence,
Where ancient Piety, a matron hoar,
Still ſeems to keep the hoſpitable door;
Ye cloiſters pale that lengthening to the ſight,
Still ſtep by ſtep to muſings mild invite;
Ye high arch'd walls, where oft the bard has caught
The glowing ſentiment, the lofty thought:
Ye temples dim, where pious duty pays
Her holy hymns of ever-echoing praiſe;
Lo! your lov'd Isis, from the bord'ring vale,
With all a mother's fondneſs bids you hail!
Hail, Oxford, hail! of all that's good and great,
Of all that's fair, the guardian and the ſeat;

Nurſe of each brave purſuit, each generous aim,
By truth exalted to the throne of fame!
Like Greece in ſcience and in liberty,
As Athens learn'd, as Lacedæmon free!
Ev'n now confeſt to my adoring eyes,
In awful ranks thy ſacred ſons ariſe:
With ev'ry various flow'r thy temples wreath'd,
That in thy gardens green its fragrance breath'd.
Tuning to knightly tale his Britiſh reeds,
Thy crowding Bards immortal CHAUCER leads:
His hoary head o'erlooks the gazing choir,
And beams on all around cæleſtial fire.
With graceful ſtep ſee ADDISON advance,
The ſweeteſt child of Attic elegance!
To all but his belov'd embrace deny'd,
See LOCKE leads Reaſon, his majeſtic bride!
See ſacred HAMMOND, as he treads the field,
With goldlike arm uprears his heav'nly ſhield.
All who beneath the ſhades of gentle peace,
Beſt plan'd the labours of domeſtic eaſe;

Who taught with truth, or with perſuaſion mov'd;
Who ſooth'd with Numbers, or with ſenſe improv'd;
Who told the pow'rs of reaſon, or refin'd
All, all that ſtrengthen'd or adorn'd the mind;
Each prieſt of health who mix'd the balmy bowl,
To rear frail man, and ſtay the fleeting ſoul;
All crowd around, and echoing to the ſky,
Hail, OXFORD, hail! with filial tranſport cry.
And ſee yon ſolemn band! with virtuous aim,
'Twas theirs in thought the glorious deed to frame:
With pious plans each muſing feature glows,
And well-weigh'd counſels mark their meaning brows.
" † Lo theſe the leaders of thy patriot line,"
HAMDEN and HOOKER, HYDE and SIDNEY ſhine.
Theſe from thy ſource the fires of Freedom caught:
How well thy ſons by their example taught;
While in each breaſt th' hereditary flame
Still blazes unextinguiſh'd and the ſame!

† Vid. the ELEGY. Pag. 4.

Nor

Nor all the toils of thoughtful peace engage,
'Tis thine to form the hero as the ſage.
I ſee the ſable-ſuited prince advance
With lillies crown'd, the ſpoils of bleeding France,
EDWARD--------the Muſes in yon hallow'd ſhade
Bound on his tender thigh the martial blade:
Bade him the ſteel for Britiſh freedom draw,
And OXFORD taught the deeds that CRESSY ſaw.

And ſee, great father of the laureat band,
The † BRITISH KING before me ſeems to ſtand;
He by my plenty-crowned ſcenes beguil'd,
And genial influence of my ſeaſons mild,
Hither of yore (forlorn, forgotten maid)
The Muſe in prattling infancy convey'd;
From Gothic rage the helpleſs virgin bore,
And fix'd her cradle on my friendly ſhore:
Soon grew the maid beneath his foſt'ring hand,
Soon pour'd her bleſſings o'er th' enlighten'd land.

† *Alfred. Regis Romani. V. Virg. Æn.* 6.

Tho'

Tho' rude the dome, and humble the retreat,
Where firſt his pious care ordain'd her ſeat,
Lo! now on high ſhe dwells in Attic bow'rs,
And proudly lifts to heav'n her hundred tow'rs.
He firſt fair Learning's and Britannia's cauſe
Adorn'd with manners, and advanc'd with laws;
He bade relent the Briton's ſavage heart,
And form'd his ſoul to ſocial ſcenes of art;
Wiſeſt and beſt of Kings!------with raviſh'd gaze
Elate the long proceſſion he ſurveys:
Joyful he ſmiles to find, that not in vain
He plan'd the rudiments of Learning's reign:
Himſelf he marks in each ingenuous breaſt,
With all the founder in the race expreſt:
With rapture views, fair Freedom ſtill ſurvive
In yon bright domes (ill-fated fugitive.)
(Such ſcene, as when the Goddeſs pour'd the beam
Unſullied, on his ancient diadem)

† —— —— —— *Ad capitolia ducit*
Aurea nunc, olim Sylveſtribus horrida dumis. VIRG. Æn.

Well

Well pleas'd, that in his own Pierian seat
She plumes her wings, and rests her weary feet;
That here at last she takes her fav'rite stand,
" Here deigns to linger e'er she leave the land.